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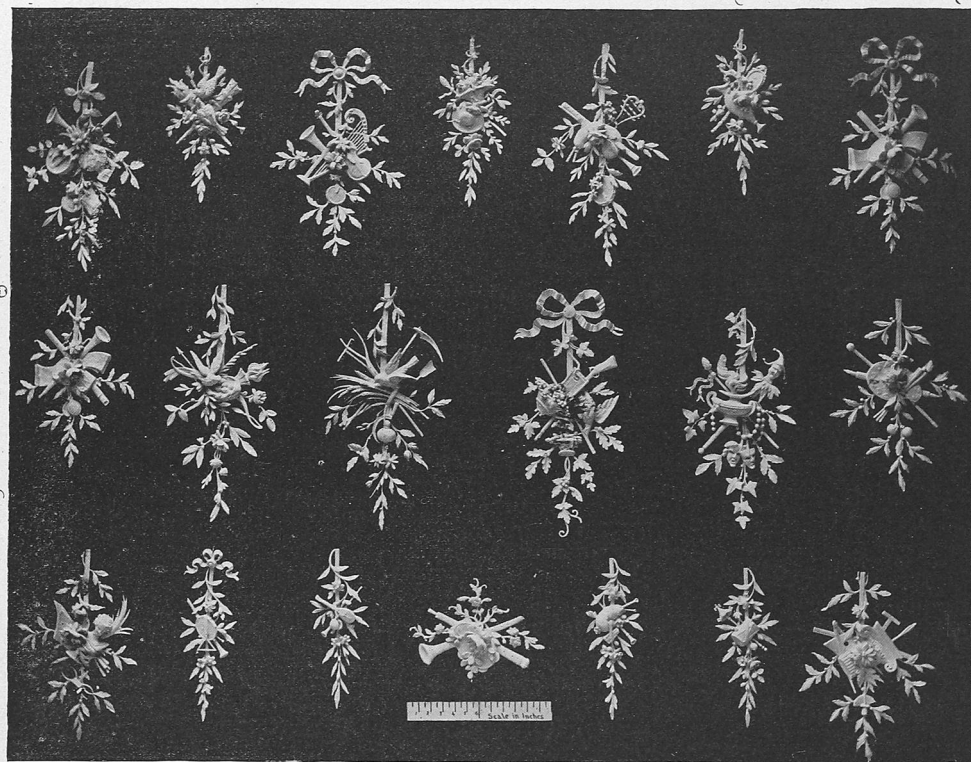
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EXAMPLES OF FRENCH CARTON PIERRE RELIEF. BY JAS. T. HALL & CO., NEW YORK.

### ORNAMENTAL RELIEF WORK AS AN AMERICAN INDUSTRY.



THE question is often asked us, "Is the French style fashionable?" Some years ago the French styles, as we now know them, were not popular with the average decorator. There was, however, a demand for first-class Louis Quinze work among the upper ten thousand, and so rapidly

did the fascinating French styles gain upon the taste of the public at large, that Carton Pierre and Papier Maché were beginning to be imported in large quantities.

This fact so impressed itself on the minds of certain leading decorators in this country that, with our world-wide reputation for perseverance and progress, we are now able to hold our own even with the best foreign styles of decorative art.

To-day, we have in this country a few successful manufacturers of this beautiful and useful decorative material. Prominent among them are Messrs. James T. Hall & Co., of this city, examples of whose works appear on this page, and show conclusively the beauty, grace and skill displayed in this line of art industry.

The popularity of French decorative art some few years back seemed to settle upon the Louis Quinze, or Rococo, as it was more generally called, and the introduction of the subtle mode was, as many of us know, an era of difficulties for both artist and artisan, but these difficulties were overcome, as events point to many successful results.

Nobody of really academic taste ever attempted to condone the tortuous lines and tricky decoration of the Rococo period; it was pretty, whimsical and meretricious, but it sold well and that was sufficient from the manufacturer's standpoint. Hardly had the designers gained the mastery of the Louis Quinze eccentricities, than the capricious public taste turned to "fresh fields." The Empire style stepped boldly into popularity. In the beginning of its adoption here the inclination was to use it in its entirety, and the tendency was to over-elaborate; it was "prostrate beneath the wealthy burden of decoration, which it heaped upon itself," as a popular writer aptly puts it.

One cannot be surprised that the wealth of detail in the newly born style led to license, as it was only the natural course of things that it should be so. But after a time we see operating a restraint that is characteristic of a refined and educated people, and to-day we have an adaptation of the Empire in its decorative details, simple, chaste and elegant as the most rigid purist could desire.